

In the Claims

1. (currently amended) A method for achieving superantigen mediated expansion of antigen-specific T cells for ~~cancer and infectious agent treatment/prophylaxis~~ inducing an immune response against melanoma which comprises administering a ~~tumor or infectious agent melanoma~~ specific antigen composition, followed by administration of a superantigen composition at ~~an optimized~~ a predetermined time interval following said administering of said ~~melanoma tumor or infectious~~ specific antigen composition to ~~maximize~~ enhance the cellular immune response to said antigen, the humoral immune response to said antigen, the cytokine response to administration of said antigen, or combinations of said enhancements, wherein said method enhances resistance against onset of melanoma.
2. The method according to claim 1 wherein said superantigen composition comprises a combined SEA/SEB composition.
3. The method according to claim 1 wherein said superantigen composition is administered at least four days after administration of said antigen.
4. The method according to claim 1 wherein said superantigen composition is administered at least seven days after administration of said antigen.
5. The method according to claim 1 wherein said superantigen composition includes superantigens with V β specificities for enhancing antigen-specific immune responses to various pathologic conditions associated with specific antigenic mediators or markers.
6. The method according to claim 1 wherein different combinations of superantigens are administered in order to expand the V β repertoire against specific antigens.
7. (canceled)

8. The method according to claim 1 ~~for vaccinating against pathologic conditions selected from infectious disease and tumors, which comprises administering specific antigens associated with the specific pathologic condition sought to be prevented,~~ followed by a regimen of booster vaccinations and superantigen administration at ~~optimized~~ predetermined times and dosages, in relation to the timing and dosage of administering said specific antigens.

9. (canceled)

10. (canceled)

11. The method according to claim 1 wherein said superantigen is a superantigen agonist or antagonist peptide or a combination of peptides, peptides and proteins, or combinations of proteins.

12. (currently amended) A method of protecting an animal or human against ~~infection and~~ tumor development which comprises administering a superantigen at an appropriate time after vaccination with a tumor or ~~infectious agent~~ specific antigen in said animal or human in which said method is practiced, wherein said tumor specific antigen is specific to melanoma.

13. The method according to claim 12 wherein the dosage of superantigen is titrated to achieve the maximum beneficial immune response without inducing unacceptably large toxic side-effects.

14. A method of enhancement of tumoricidal activity which comprises activating splenocytes by treating a human or animal in need of such treatment with a tumor antigen vaccination and subsequently administering one or more superantigens.

15. A method of enhancing cytokine production which comprises treating a human, animal or isolated cell with an antigen vaccination and subsequently administering one or

more superantigens.

16. (currently amended) A method of inducing an anamnestic response in a human or animal in which it is desirable to induce said anamnestic response which comprises treating said human or animal in need of such treatment with ~~an~~ a melanoma antigen vaccination and subsequently administering one or more superantigens.

17. A method of inducing an enhanced antigen-specific immune response which comprises treating a human or animal in need of such treatment with an antigen vaccination comprising at least one antigen associated with melanoma and subsequently administering one or more superantigens.

18. (canceled)

19. (new) The method of claim 14, wherein said activating splenocytes by treating a human or animal in need of such treatment with a tumor antigen vaccination and subsequently administering one or more superantigens is followed by a regimen of booster vaccinations and superantigen administration at predetermined times and dosages, in relation to the timing and dosage of administering said specific antigens.

20. (new) The method of claim 14, wherein said tumor antigen vaccination comprises at least one antigen associated with melanoma.

21. (new) The method of claim 14 wherein said subsequently administering one or more superantigens occurs more than seven days after said treating a human or animal in need of such treatment with a tumor antigen vaccination.

22. (new) The method of claim 15, wherein said method is followed by a regimen of booster vaccinations and superantigen administration at predetermined times and dosages, in relation to the timing and dosage of administering said specific antigens.

23. (new) The method of claim 15, wherein said antigen vaccination comprises at least one antigen associated with melanoma.
24. (new) The method of claim 15 wherein said subsequently administering one or more superantigens occurs more than seven days after said treating a human, animal or isolated cell with an antigen vaccination.
25. (new) The method of claim 16 followed by a regimen of booster vaccinations and superantigen administration at optimized times and dosages, in relation to the timing and dosage of administering said specific antigens.
26. (new) The method of claim 16 wherein subsequently administering one or more superantigens occurs more than seven days after said treating said human or animal in need of such treatment with a melanoma antigen vaccination.